

Sarasota Housing Authority to host Books & Badges with Sarasota PD

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The Sarasota Housing Authority, in partnership with the Sarasota Police Department, the Book Rich Environments collaborative, and Sarasota County Libraries, will be hosting its annual Books & Badges literacy event on Thursday.

Books & Badges will begin at 3 p.m. at SHA's family public housing campus at 1912 N. Orange Ave. and also serves to commemorate the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading's National Summer Learning Week. The event will provide several hundred free books for low-income kids to read and mitigate against summer learning loss.

'Two of our core passions at the Sarasota Housing Authority are early childhood education and building trust between our families and local law enforcement,' said William Russell, CEO of the Sarasota Housing Authority. 'Books and Badges moves the needle on both issues, and we are excited to bring this back to our community this year.'

SPD officers will be handing out books to children ages 3-17 as part of an ongoing effort to help improve relationships and trust with families residing in public housing.

'Each summer, the men and women of the Sarasota Police Department look forward to partnering with the Sarasota Housing Authority and other community partners for this event,' Sarasota Police Chief Rex Troche said. 'We're humbled and honored to have our officers spend time with children reading and continuing to foster positive relationships over a love of books.'

Submitted by Genevieve Judge